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On A Ceaseless Contradiction: A Catastrophic Capture of a Celebrated River in
A.K.Ramanujan's "A River"

Abstract

"LITERATURE IS THE TEST DRIVE FOR THE REAL RACE". In literature there are three main divisions namely Prose, Poetry, Drama. According to Wordsworth poetry is the spontaneous overflow of thoughts and emotions. This poem "A River" written by an Indian poet A.K.Ramanujan who has depicted different perspective of the river which is being celebrated by the folks for years. He has succeeded in his attempt to describe the contradictory features of the river through which he has explained the people's view on sensing the issue which is being happened around them.

Keywords: Cats and Dogs, Evidence, Perspective, Snowflake, Violent.

The Poem "A RIVER" is written by an Indian poet A.K.Ramanujan who is one of India's distinguished modern poets. His collection of poems are *Relations*, *Strides*, *Second sight* and *various translations* from Tamil classical poetry and Kannada vachanas have earned him a reputation as a better translator than a poet. Ramanujan, who had been teaching in Chicago University for several years, earned a place for Indian Poetry in the western world through his

translations and scholarship. This poem is based on the real incident in December 1993, when there is a flood in the most celebrated river which is Vaigai in Madurai.

The God has created the world full of humans, animals, plants etc... but the concept which links each other is the dependency because everyone is dependent on the other. For example: The Plants are in need of carbon dioxide, they get it from human beings and they are in need of oxygen which is emitted by the plants so, without one the other cannot survive. Every creation in the world has both positive and negative but humans are excited to take the positive into the account because it is the one which gives happiness but here in this poem the poet has explained about the negative side of the river.

In the poem the poet has explained about the famous river which flows in Madurai named Vaigai. Madurai is popularly named as “THE TEMPLE CITY” where the maximum area of the city is occupied by the temples. Mostly we believe the poetry is the genre where we evidence the beauty of the nature. Likewise the poets are also interested to write about the positive perspective. Here the poet has mentioned the changes of the river according to the seasons. This poem is the based on the real incident which is happened in December 1993, there is the flood in the most celebrated river “VAIGAI” where many have lost their lives.

He explained about the stage of the river especially in the two seasons namely, summer and rainy seasons. He said that the river dries to the sand and also it appears to be an empty land where there is not even a single species during summer. The Watergate is full of rust and the hair of the women moreover the straws are stuck to it. When the sunrays falls on the wet rocks it appears to be the sleeping crocodiles and the dry ones resembled the water buffaloes.

In the second stanza, he has explained about the flood which the stage of the river in the rainy seasons and it is contradictory perspective to the initial stanza of this poem. The poet A.K.Ramanujan is the keen observer of the nature has been known to the readers through this work because he has even noticed the minute variations of the environment and stated in this

poem a river. He has noted that as soon as the rainy season has been started the same river Vaigai which has shown its another face to the poet as well as the people of the city, where he has reported the raising inches of the water and also about the disappearing steps where the people usually take their bath during the normal days. He has extended his views to describe the loss when it is raining cats and dogs in Madurai. In this poem he said that where the three houses of the village is washed by the water which is at the back of the river. Not only the houses but also the cattle have lost their life namely, Gopi and Brinda which is the usual Indian name given to the cattle and finally the pregnant woman who has expecting the twins but the small creatures which does not even realize the world have lost their life along with their mother. Though there is a loss, the poet has shown his excellence in describing that in the decreasing order where it is started from the three village houses and to the two cattle at last to the unknown pregnant lady. In order to emphasis the foetus who is carried by the pregnant woman is twins, he has also penned the lines as follows,

..One pregnant woman expecting identical twins
 expecting identical twins
 with no moles on their bodies,
 with different-coloured diapers
 to tell them apart.

(4th stanza, 11th -15th line)

There is no flaw over the twins who have kicked in the blank walls of their mother but they too have lost their life with others. We should not accuse the nature for these losses; we are also responsible for this violent behavior of the river. Nowadays in the snowflake generation we do not care about others instead we are concern about our own desires and requirements and we ignored to think about the environment which we live and we have eagerly

started to exploit it. The following quote should be remembered by everyone before destructing the nature made by the almighty, “IF YOU KILL NATURE, NATURE WILL KILL YOU.”

The word River has brought the positive notion to the readers because it is the source of life as well as the civilization has initiated at the bank of the river but after reading the poem one will come to know that the poem is all about the hidden side of the river which most of the people are failed to notice, this showed the poet’s uniqueness in approaching a issue. There are both pros and cons in all the things which we sense but it is in our hand to choose the positive in that. In that the poet A.K.Ramanujan has chosen to depict the negative side of the river. Usually the people’s nature is to find the flaw over others but no one is ready to correct ours or to help the society, here he has fulfilled the work of the poet to bring the ignored feelings to the wide world through his poem.

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